

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



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NEWS RELEASE

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Barona Band Of Mission Indians New Presenting Sponsor For Balboa Park December Nights

SAN DIEGO -- Deputy Mayor Toni Atkins announced today that the Barona Band of Mission Indians has generously stepped forward as the new presenting sponsor of Balboa Park December Nights, the annual holiday festival that brings more than 150,000 visitors to the park during the first weekend in December. Barona's \$75,000 donation will help ensure that the 28th annual December Nights event will be a big success.

"The City of San Diego is proud, honored and truly excited that the Barona Band of Mission Indians will be the major sponsor of our annual Balboa Park December Nights celebration," said Deputy Mayor Toni Atkins. "The Barona tribe takes distinct pride in their Native American heritage, culture and traditions, and the central role that family plays in their everyday life. This sponsorship is a perfect fit for such a beloved civic event geared toward families and steeped in tradition."

"Last year the City of San Diego was asked to take over the management of this beloved community event with the goal of creating a sustainable business plan for December Nights. Our partnership with Barona is an important step toward achieving this goal and will allow the event to continue for the 28th consecutive year" said Atkins. The City of San Diego, the San Diego Business Improvement District (BID) Council, the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership and the City's Office of Special Events and Park and Recreation Department are once again working together to present a first-class holiday event for the region. The addition of the Barona Band of Mission Indians as the presenting sponsor will inject the event with new energy and broaden the already vast cultural experience offered to visitors.

"The Barona Band of Mission Indians is proud to announce our sponsorship of Balboa Park December Nights," said Rhonda Welch-Scalco, chairwoman of the Barona Band of Mission Indians. "Our tribe values family, traditions, and giving back to the community, and December Nights is a natural event for us to support. We look forward to helping create a memorable holiday celebration that everyone in San Diego can enjoy."

Balboa Park December Nights is the largest free community festival in San Diego. The two-day event, held this year on Friday, Dec. 2, from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 3, from noon to 10:00 p.m., will once again feature traditional celebrations with more than 80 museums and cultural organizations in the park opening their doors. In the spirit of the holidays, participating Balboa Park

museums open their doors free of charge from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. both days.

Additionally, the three new holiday-themed entertainment features that were added last year will again be offered this year. San Diego's finest restaurants will serve the public at the Cabrillo Bridge/Marston Point Food Tasting; the Cascades International Holiday Marketplace will feature crafts, food and entertainment from around the world; and there will again be carnival rides, a petting zoo, a children's stage and more for the youngsters to enjoy at the Palisade Midway, including the Navidad de Colores Children's Art Contest sponsored by XEWT Channel 12.

"Each year, Balboa Park December Nights seems to add great new features while maintaining the traditional elements that folks have come to love and expect over the past 28 years," said Atkins. "With the addition of a sponsor with deep roots in Native American culture and tradition, this year's event should offer yet a new set of fascinating and exciting music, food and entertainment offerings."

In addition to the Barona Band of Mission Indians, other sponsors include the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, the House of Hospitality's Balboa Park Promotions, and the Balboa Park Committee, all from Balboa Park; media partners KYYX Radio and XEWT/Channel 12; and community sponsors The San Diego Foundation, The Parker Foundation, The Friends of Balboa Park, The County of San Diego/Supervisor Greg Cox, The Dr. Seuss Foundation, and Del Cerro Baptist Church.

Community participants are a huge part of the success of Balboa Park December Nights. More than 40 entertainment groups provide, free of charge, their gifts of music, dance and drama. Hundreds of volunteers from Balboa Park cultural institutions, and from the community, donate their time and talents to help pull off such a large-scale civic event.

For up-to-the-minute information about the 28th annual Balboa Park December Nights, the website at www.balboapark.org is continually updated with details about entertainment, food offerings, museums and cultural attractions, as well as parking and traffic control.

Balboa Park December Nights 2005 presented by Barona is hosted in partnership by the City of San Diego, the Office of Special Events and other city departments provide festival management expertise; the San Diego Business Improvement District (BID) Council, a non-profit association of the seventeen BIDs throughout San Diego, whose members promote and revitalize their historic retail districts, as well as manage civic special events for more than one million guests annually; and the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, a coalition of the non-profit cultural institutions in the Park serving over 6 million visitors annually. Barona is the 2005 Presenting Sponsor, having stepped forward to provide major support for the beloved holiday celebration. The City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department manages and maintains the spectacular landscaping, grounds and structures of Balboa Park and provides generous in-kind services for December Nights.

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